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LAUNCHING THE SMALL SATELLITE REVOLUTION: REALISING A RELIABLE, COST
EFFECTIVE AND DEDICATED LAUNCH SERVICE.

Abstract

The space industry is experiencing a revolution in the growth of small satellites, and yet a reliable, predictable and cost effective dedicate and tailored launch service for these satellites is still not operational. Firefly Space Systems have developed a new type of small satellite launch vehicle, which has been driven entirely by the needs of small satellite customers. In development since 2014, the first Firefly vehicle, Firefly Alpha, has seen major progress in 2015 and 2016 with major technical challenges tackled and solved through development and test campaigns. This paper will summarise the progress made towards realising the first Alpha flights and the introduction of a fully commercial service for small satellite launch, describing not only the technical progress, but also other aspects of the small satellite customer launch service offering, including logistics, operations and contracting. An overview of future Firefly vehicles and evolutions will also be given.